

2025 Regular Session

HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 344

BY REPRESENTATIVE LARVADAIN

SUBSTANCE ABUSE: Creates a task force to study substance use trends and treatment among wards of the state

1 A RESOLUTION

2 To create a task force to study substance use trends and treatment among wards of the state  
3 of Louisiana, including incarcerated populations, i.e. those incarcerated in local  
4 parish prisons, state prisons, individuals on probation and parole, and participants in  
5 transitional work programs, and the Louisiana foster care system, and to report its  
6 findings to the legislature no later than January 31, 2026.

7 WHEREAS, the national average indicates that approximately fifty-eight percent of  
8 United States state prisoners and sixty-three percent of sentenced United States jail inmates  
9 met the criteria for drug dependence or use; and

10 WHEREAS, in comparison, Louisiana sits well above other states for substance use  
11 among its incarcerated populations, with seventy-three percent of people remanded to the  
12 Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections custody having substance use issues  
13 that contribute to their criminal behavior according to according to the Louisiana Department  
14 of Public Safety and Corrections; and

15 WHEREAS, according to the Louisiana Department of Health, individuals involved  
16 in the criminal justice system in Louisiana face significant barriers to care, such as lack of  
17 access to medication for a substance use disorder, regardless of whether they were in such  
18 treatment upon entry into prison or jail; and

19 WHEREAS, research from several leading health organizations, including the  
20 American Psychiatric Association, National Institute on Drug Abuse, and Substance Abuse

1 and Mental Health Services Administration defines addiction as a complex chronic condition  
2 that involves an individual's mental and physical health; and

3 WHEREAS, according to the National Institute of Health, better mental health in  
4 prison is related to lower recidivism rates; moreover, when individuals make significant  
5 improvements in their in-prison mental health, once released, their likelihood of recidivism  
6 drops even lower; and

7 WHEREAS, Louisiana saw a significant increase in the percentage of drug-related  
8 deaths in prisons, rising from just over two percent of all known deaths in 2015 to almost  
9 twelve percent in 2021, according to Incarceration Transparency launched by Loyola  
10 University; and

11 WHEREAS, the majority of accidental, suicide, and drug overdose deaths occurred  
12 in parish jails, also detailed by the Incarceration Transparency; and

13 WHEREAS, a lack of substance use treatment options creates a demand for  
14 contraband flow into prisons, increasing criminal activity within institutions; and

15 WHEREAS, released inmates with both mental illness and substance use disorders  
16 exhibit higher recidivism rates, highlighting the necessity for integrated treatment strategies  
17 addressing both issues simultaneously.

18 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the House of Representatives of the  
19 Legislature of Louisiana does hereby create and provide for the Task Force on Substance  
20 Use amongst Incarcerated and Released Populations to study the causes and effects of  
21 substance use among those incarcerated in local parish prisons, state prisons, individuals on  
22 probation and parole, and participants in transitional work programs, and the Louisiana  
23 foster care system and propose any recommendations regarding substance use treatment.

24 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall consist of the following  
25 members:

26 (1) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections or  
27 his designee.

28 (2) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Health or his designee.

29 (3) A representative of the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee on Parole.

1 (4) A representative of the Louisiana Bureau of Substance Use Treatment within the  
2 Louisiana Department of Health.

3 (5) A representative of the Louisiana Correctional Association.

4 (6) A representative of the Louisiana Sheriff's Association.

5 (7) A representative of the Steve Hoyle Intensive Substance Abuse Treatment  
6 Program.

7 (8) A representative of the Louisiana Center for Prevention Resources at Southern  
8 University.

9 (9) A representative of the Louisiana Addiction Research Center at LSU Health  
10 Shreveport.

11 (10) A representative of Incarceration Transparency at Loyola University New  
12 Orleans, College of Law.

13 (11) An addiction medicine physician specializing in medication-assisted treatment  
14 designated by the Louisiana Addictive Disorders Regulatory Authority.

15 (12) A representative of Louisiana Parole Project.

16 (13) A representative of Southwest Louisiana Do No Harm.

17 (14) A representative of Louisiana Progress.

18 (15) A representative of the Promise of Justice Initiative.

19 (16) The secretary of the Louisiana Department of Children and Family Services or  
20 his designee.

21 (17) A representative of the Louisiana Center for Children's Rights.

22 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force is tasked with the following  
23 responsibilities:

24 (1) Examining the scope of substance use within Louisiana's relevant facilities, its  
25 impact on public health within the state, its relationship with criminal activity and  
26 recidivism, and the availability of treatment services.

27 (2) Reviewing current substance use treatment and rehabilitation programs available  
28 in Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections facilities and Louisiana  
29 Department of Children and Family Services, assessing their efficacy and identifying  
30 barriers to access.

1           (3) Reviewing substance use trends and treatment accessibility among incarcerated  
2 and foster care populations, including an analysis of racial, gender, and socioeconomic  
3 factors that may impact outcomes.

4           (4) Proposing legislative and programmatic changes to improve substance use  
5 treatment for individuals who are in the foster care system, incarcerated individuals, and  
6 individuals reentering society, with a focus on reducing criminal behaviors, including  
7 recidivism and supporting long-term recovery.

8           (5) Providing recommendations on funding needs for the expansion or creation of  
9 evidence-based substance use treatment programs.

10          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall actively seek input from  
11 individuals directly impacted by incarceration and substance use disorder, as well as  
12 organizations specializing in community-based recovery and reentry services.

13          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force will analyze and consider national  
14 and other states' trends and practices to apply to proactive policy development.

15          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall convene its first meeting no  
16 later than September 1, 2025, and meet as needed to accomplish the goals of this Resolution.

17          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the task force shall submit a comprehensive  
18 report of its findings and recommendations to the House of Representatives of the  
19 Legislature of Louisiana and the David R. Poynter Legislative Research Library no later  
20 than January 31, 2026.

21          BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
22 secretary of the Louisiana Department of Public Safety and Corrections, the secretary of the  
23 Louisiana Department of Health, the chair of the Louisiana Board of Pardons and Committee  
24 on Parole, the president of the Louisiana Correctional Association, the president of the  
25 Louisiana Sheriff's Association, the warden of care and treatment at the Bossier Medium  
26 Security Facility, the executive director of the Louisiana Center for Prevention Resources,  
27 the executive director of the Louisiana Addiction Research Center at LSU Health  
28 Shreveport, the clinical professor of Incarceration Transparency at Loyola University New  
29 Orleans, College of Law, the executive director of the Louisiana Addictive Disorders  
30 Regulatory Authority, the president of Louisiana Parole Project, the chief executive officer

1 of Southwest Louisiana Do No Harm, the executive director of Louisiana Progress, the  
2 executive director of the Promise of Justice Initiative, the secretary of the Louisiana  
3 Department of Children and Family Services, and the executive director of the Louisiana  
4 Center for Children's Rights.

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DIGEST

The digest printed below was prepared by House Legislative Services. It constitutes no part of the legislative instrument. The keyword, one-liner, abstract, and digest do not constitute part of the law or proof or indicia of legislative intent. [R.S. 1:13(B) and 24:177(E)]

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HR 344 Original	2025 Regular Session	Larvadain
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Creates the Task Force on Substance Use amongst Incarcerated and Released Populations to study the causes and effects of substance use among those incarcerated in local parish prisons, state prisons, individuals on probation and parole, and participants in transitional work programs, and the Louisiana foster care system, and propose any recommendations regarding substance use treatment.